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HINTS TO WORKMEN.

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SOCIETY in England is said to consist of three classes—the higher, middle, and lower. These distinctions are artificial, and owe their origin to traditional usages, or to the supposed degree of opulence of the respective parties. The division into three classes is a thing of modern times. Formerly, the classes in society were only two in number—the aristocracy and their vassals. The emancipation of the latter, by which they were enabled to pursue handicraft employment, and carry on trade on their own account, led to the gradual rise of a middle class. This class, which now consists of capitalists, merchants, tradesmen, professional men, and others, is therefore nothing more than an expansion upwards of the lower people—the descendants of the liberated serfs of the middle ages. The rise from a humble and obscure, to a comparatively high and conspicuous position, was effected by no undue means: it is a result of diligent industry, economy, and a reasonable share of ambition.

A foreigner, judging of English society, is apt to form the opinion that each of the three classes is a fixed entity, or at least that great difficulties are in the way of any transference from one to another. Careful examination would soon dispel such a delusion. The remarkable thing about society in Britain is the upward movement in rank. From the lower classes large numbers are continually ascending and taking their place in the middle classes; and from the middle classes a similar, though less extensive movement, is making into the higher classes. So far is the aristocracy from being a fixed determinate body, as it

is generally assumed to be, that unless it received constant accessions from the middle classes, it would speedily cease to exist. So also, as respects the middle classes, they would in no long time dwindle into insignificance, unless recruited from the ranks who, in point of fortune, are beneath them. Besides the general upward movement, there is in a lesser degree a movement downward, either actual or relative. In our highly artificial state of society, where so many are learned, skilful, and persevering, the competition is considerable; and unless an individual possess an average capacity, and be animated by a sincere wish to rise, or at least to keep his place, he has little chance of advancement, and will probably be mortified at seeing himself left behind in the general progress. Many, from defective education, and other untoward circumstances, but more frequently from an abandonment to mean habits, either gravitate downwards, or what is equivalent, are left in the rear, while others, more steady and energetic, are moving forwards.

It is a pleasant consideration that there exist no legal or constitutional impediments to the absorption of lower into higher classes. From one class to another the transition is effected by a series of movements, each apparently of little moment, though all tending to produce a distinct change of situation. All usually depends on the first effort. A desire to advance—that is, to improve in circumstances—must be formed in the mind, and what follows after is only a natural consequence. Very different ideas, however, are formed respecting the means of advance. In so important a matter, it is best to be governed by the experience of mankind. On looking around on society, we observe that the advance of men from one situation in life to another, has not been achieved by any miraculous or wonderful conjunction of circumstances—is not a result of any political or social revolution, or the passing of any particular law. The whole thing has evidently been a consequence of individual exertion—much anxious consideration, much personal trouble, much denial of present enjoyment, perhaps some contumely, certainly a degree of moral courage, self-respect, and ambition; rarely any assistance. Such is what daily observation brings to light on the subject.

We have been thus particular, from a conviction that erroneous views are afloat respecting the means of improving circumstances. A notion industriously propagated is, that advancement from a lower to a higher position is only to be effected through the means of certain vaguely-defined political changes. We are far from saying that individual does not depend on public liberty; nor can we deny the special advantages to the people of certain fiscal alterations. But, after all, a man's condition is only to be substantially bettered by his own unassisted exertions. He must not look to this or that law for an improvement in his means of living; but push on with a thorough determination to

work out his own advancement ; or, at all events, the realisation of that comfort of mind which springs from a consciousness of having performed a prescribed and honourable duty.

Writers who recommend a course of industry, perseverance, and self-denial to the young, are sometimes accused of laying too exclusive a stress on these points, and of concealing from their readers that much in the way of success or comfort in life depends on chance circumstances. We are perfectly willing to allow that circumstances are of immense consequence—that many men, with all their industry and saving, would have been drudges all their days but for circumstances. But we must remember that much depends, first, on a person placing himself in a situation in which circumstances may be expected to act for his advantage, or, to use a common expression, “ putting himself in the way of fortune ;” and in the second place, his possessing such skill or abilities, that when favourable circumstances do arise, he will be able to make use of them. Of what value are circumstances or opportunities if a man has not the ability to take advantage of them ? The circumstances longed for slip away from under him, and form the basis of fortune to some more active, skilful, or careful individual. Still it may be urged that thousands of persons have it never in their power, do what they will, to better their condition. This is, however, urging extreme cases. For example, it may be said, human beings born in slavery, doomed by the most cruel laws to live and die in slavery, and denied all means of mental culture, can never, by any possible means, improve their condition, or take advantage of circumstances. Also, that an innumerable body of artisans in this country in which we live are in a condition pretty nearly as hopeless. But it will not do for the moralist to remain silent, because *all* cannot profit by his admonitions. It is enough for us to say, that there are many individuals scattered throughout society, who have it in their power to improve their condition by the practices which are recommended. Besides, after all, if no actual benefit arise, as far as the means of daily subsistence are concerned, there is a happiness of no ordinary kind in the consciousness of having done one’s duty, of having lost none of those opportunities of well-doing which may have been operating and maturing for our advantage.

It would help materially to improve the prospects of the working-classes, could they be brought to consider that there is no essential difference between their situation and that of persons belonging to the middle classes who possess the same amount of income. Many skilled artisans realise a wage of 30s. per week, or £75 yearly. This is as much as is realised by many clerks in banking-houses, dissenting ministers, and others who are expected to maintain the appearance of gentlemen. How do families in the middle classes with this small income support themselves in a creditable manner ? By excessive economy ; that is to say, every

shilling is carefully husbanded and dispensed ; nothing superfluous is bought ; every necessary is procured from the best dealers, and in quantities which insures saving. For example, instead of buying coal in hundredweights, it is purchased by the cart ; and thus the very utmost is made of the slender means at command. That which supports families of this class in their economic arrangements, is the constant feeling of self-respect, along with a hope of seeing better days. Pains are taken to appear at all times respectable, and beyond want. The world is asked for no pity. The aim is to keep on an equality of rank with friends—not to lose caste ; to give a good education to children, and inspire them with the proper desire of bettering their circumstances. Thousands of families in the middle ranks of life are at this moment engaged in this noble and arduous struggle. Why, then, should not workmen with their families address themselves to the same line of conduct ? Why should not a well-employed operative be every whit as respectable, as comfortable, and have as agreeable prospects as hundreds of persons who are his superiors only in name ? It is with the view of aiding the well-disposed in their efforts to improve their minds and circumstances, that we throw together the materials of the present sheet. We address ourselves not alone to working-men, skilled and unskilled, but to all who have it in their power to elevate themselves in the social scale.

INDEPENDENCE OF THOUGHT AND ACTION.

The working-classes generally are remarkable for their credulity. They too often believe, and allow themselves to be carried away, by opinions propounded by individuals of their own body, although these opinions are at variance with the experience, or with principles professed by the wisest men in the country. For example, every writer of any weight, from the time of Adam Smith, has shown that the rate of wages depends on *supply and demand*. If the supply of hands exceeds the demand for them, wages will fall ; but if the supply falls short of the demand, wages will rise. Although this principle is consistent with all experience, it is observed that working-men either do not recognise its truth, or that, recognising it, they rarely possess the moral courage to avow their belief. Suffering themselves to be misled by a few forward and perhaps designing men, they proclaim doctrines respecting trade which all intelligent persons have long since given up. No fact more conclusively proves the deficiency of education among the people, than that large masses of men should be found maintaining principles which, sixty years ago, were exploded in every country in Europe.

What we should wish to see, is a little more spirit of independent thought and action among working-men. Instead of allowing themselves to be carried away by the harangues of any one

who sets up as their leader, let them go to the usual fountains of knowledge, and study the subject of debate for themselves. Books on every topic of interest are open for their perusal. There are few towns in which the works of Smith, and other writers on political and social economy, cannot be easily obtained. On the deficiency of this independence of action, we take leave to present the following passages from the work of an operative in a woollen factory, who may be presumed to speak with impartiality.*

" It is a remarkable proof of the willingness of ignorance to be led away by pompous appearances, that in nearly all instances of extensive 'turn-outs,' the bulk of the union has been governed by a few dominant self-interested demagogues. In the Bradford district a man arose among them who was a perfect stranger, but he had the requisite qualification of 'gab,' and a profusion of mysterious hints and observations on 'equality of wages.' He was supported by the misguided men in making his own employment, for he had only to suggest the necessity of a certain 'turn-out,' and he was supported with a zeal which would have been worthy of a nobler and a better cause. A succession of 'turn-outs' enabled him to have great power in the disposal of monies, and after having created grievous sores between master and men—having caused the utter ruin and consequent misery of starvation to become the familiar with hitherto comfortable families—having thrown still wider open, in that district, the gulf between master and man—and after having been domiciled at the ale-house for several months where the 'Union Grand Lodge' was held, wallowing in the earnings of industry—an inquiry arose one cold winter's morning, 'Where is Mr T——; the "turn-outs" are waiting for their weekly allowance, and it is not forthcoming?' Then there was running to and fro to learn his 'whereabouts;' and after they had finally come to the conclusion, that he had vacated the chair of his promotion and petty dignity—that he had indeed deserted 'so glorious a cause'—their next step was to examine his treasury box: but he had scampered away with upwards of one hundred pounds of their money, and the lid of the treasury box went down with a hollow and an ominous sound. This betokened a speedy dissolution of the union. The idler had to think of working again; the 'committee' would have to labour for their next bread; and the dupe who had been 'drawn out' from the comfortable workshop, where he had toiled honourably and industriously all his life until now—what of him? Where are the hopes that went with him to the 'lodge,' when he was first initiated? Where does he hide his shame—miserable delinquent that he is—on this bitter

* Spring Leaves of Prose and Poetry, by J. Bradshawe Walker. London: Simpkin and Marshall. 1845. This work affords a striking instance of the polish of mind which may be attained in the most untoward circumstances.

winter's night; no 'lodge-room' for him to lounge in? And where are the helpless things that call him father? Alas! his children are in the poor-house, and the probability is, that his lifeless corpse will be found in the canal to-morrow morning! Oh that the working-classes would endeavour to *think* before they *act* in such momentous undertakings!

"It is not the province of those who live remote from the populous dwellings of the poor to form the least conception of that depth of human misery which is attendant upon those lamentable 'strikes.' The piteous wrecks they make are only known to those who are called to an intimate acquaintance with the wretched victims. The gray-headed and the young of both sexes share in the famine, and play their separate parts in the doleful drama. Dark, indeed, would be the chronicle of any 'turn-out,' if faithfully given. No pestilence ever left such irremediable evils behind it; for the seeds are only scattered during a 'turn-out,' of vitiated and loathsome weeds, that will shed their poisonous leaves upon the graves of thousands yet unborn!

"It seldom happens that a man, taken from the working-classes, and elevated to some point of distinction above his fellows in a public enterprise, can be recognised again as the same identical individual. He is sure to undergo a material change, in habits and demeanour at least; and this is rarely for the better, if the parties for whom he acts are established at the public-house.

"I once numbered among my acquaintance a young man whose studious habits had procured for him, at an early age, the respect of his wealthy neighbours; and through whose influence he was admitted to public lectures and private literary conversations, in the society of those parties who looked over his juvenile years and humble condition in life from a benevolent motive. They were wishful to water so young a plant with the drops that fall in edifying and instructive lessons, where men of talent congregate to shower forth the treasures of cultivated thought.

"A gentleman of great literary acquirements took this young student by the hand, and led him to the mechanics' institution of his native town, made him welcome to his own select library, and being a member of parliament, promised that great things should be done through his endeavours to obtain a lucrative birth for one whom he considered a rising genius. The young man continued to work at the vocation to which he had been apprenticed; he was a steady and exemplary character to all around him, and was making, at the same time, considerable progress in mathematics, architectural drawing, &c. and bade fair to be, at no distant day, removed from the necessity of factory labour.

"Light progressed with the aspiring youth without its shadow; and he developed a strong and vigorous intellect, which did not pass unnoticed among the few who had formed his acquaintance.

At length he arrived at manhood, and was on the eve of looking further into the depths of science, when, as a working-man, and a talented one, he was called to take an active part in the ‘union’ of that branch of the woollen trade to which he belonged. From that hour he fell. Intemperance waited upon every step he took as ‘grand leader’ of the district in conducting extensive strikes; and in the short space of two years he was a wretched blight, whom not even his fellow-men would dare to trust. He was now also a drunken father and a neglectful husband; and after lingering through the various gradations that reduce such a mind from its once lofty privileges to wallow in the mire of wretchedness, he died of *delirium tremens*, one of the most abandoned outcasts, and universally despised and shunned by those who at one time were cowed into obeisance by the might of his superior mind.”

The following observations, which occur in “An Address delivered before the Members of the Windsor and Eton Literary Institution, by the Rev. J. Stoughton,” may appropriately be appended to the foregoing.

AIM AT THE ATTAINMENT OF CLEAR AND ACCURATE HABITS OF THOUGHT.

“Thinking is the exercise which strengthens the mind, and without which no progress can be made in mental cultivation. A man may read, and hear, and talk; he may devour volumes, and listen to lectures every night; and yet, if he does not think, he will make after all but little, if any improvement. His head will be full of something; but it will be a crowd of lumber, like the articles in a broker’s shop. He must *think*; he must turn over subjects in his mind; he must look at them on every side; he must trace the connexion between ideas, and have everything orderly arranged. A man may even think a great deal, and not think clearly; his mind may be at work, and yet always in confusion: there may be no clear arrangement; and it is quite possible to mistake muddiness for depth. There are some men who appear very thoughtful; but from never aiming at accurate habits of thought, they talk most unintelligibly. There seems to be neither beginning, nor middle, nor end, in what they say: all is a confused jumble. Now, writing carefully is a good plan for acquiring habits of clear and connected thought, since a man is more likely to detect the disorder of his thoughts in writing than in talking.

ACQUIRE HABITS OF OBSERVATION.

“This is all-important. We live in a world of wonders; and a thousand objects appeal to our observation, and will repay it. How much is to be learned by a proper use of our eyes and ears! I know no more striking instance of this than that which we have in Gilbert White’s ‘Natural History of Selborne,’ a book

which I would recommend to all, as deeply interesting, in which several hundred closely-printed pages are filled with the most curious and instructive observations upon nature, made for the most part in the little village of Selborne, where the author spent the greater part of his days. Dr Franklin, too, was remarkable for this useful habit; and it is well said by Mrs Barbauld, ‘that he would not cross a street without making some observation beneficial to mankind.’ Who that has read them can ever forget his essays, where a knowledge of men and things is discovered, which could only be the result of close and extensive observation? Books may teach us much; but observation in some respects may teach us more. That practical knowledge so useful in the progress of life—that tact in business so desirable to possess—can be gained only in this way. Observation, as a mode of study, is the cheapest and most convenient of all. It may be carried on almost anywhere and everywhere, because in nearly all places in which we are, there is something to be learned, if we are disposed to receive instruction. Observation is connected with curiosity: the one sharpens the other, and they produce a mutual influence. Now, when curiosity prompts a wish to know more than we do on any particular subject, and we have the means of information in an intelligent friend, we should never lose the opportunity of making the needful inquiries. Let not false pride, lest we should betray ignorance, prevent us from asking a question, when it can be answered. How much knowledge do we often lose by wishing to appear wiser than we really are! Mr Locke, on being asked how he had contrived to accumulate a mine of knowledge so rich, deep, and extensive, replied, ‘that he attributed what little he knew to the not having been ashamed to ask for information, and to the rule he had laid down, of conversing with all descriptions of men on those topics chiefly that formed their own professions and pursuits;’ and it was also a maxim of the great Sir William Jones, never to neglect an opportunity of improvement.

CULTIVATE HUMILITY.

“Humility is the attribute of great and noble minds; and how beautiful does it appear! Sir Isaac Newton, in the true spirit of humility, spoke of himself at the close of life as a child who had spent his time in gathering pebbles on the shore, while the ocean lay untraversed; and Mozart, just before he died, said, ‘Now I begin to see what might be done in music.’ These expressions were worthy of the men, and they invest their genius with greater loveliness, because they throw over it the graceful mantle of humility. They, in fact, knew much, and this taught them how much more remained to be known. They ascended to a high elevation on the mountain of knowledge, but this only gave them a better idea of the loftiness of the summit. If the circle of light be large, the boundary of darkness will be equally

so; and the more we know, the more we shall be convinced of our own ignorance. This is trite enough; but we cannot remember it too often and too much, especially at the commencement of the pursuit of knowledge. Then the young aspirant often fancies he knows everything; whereas, in fact, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know. Conceit and fancied superiority are the besetting sins of the mind, when it is beginning to acquire knowledge. This must be checked. If the great apostles of science and philosophy confessed they knew so little, what ground for boasting can there be for the tyro in their schools? When tempted to pride themselves on their attainments, let such look to the almost inexhaustible treasures of learning and genius which the illustrious dead and the illustrious living have accumulated, and mark the humility allied to true intellectual greatness, and then blush for their folly in thinking so highly of themselves. Humility, while it is so beautiful and becoming, is also highly advantageous. It is a habit favourable of itself to mental improvement, as it opens the mind to receive instruction with teachableness, and makes one willing to be taught, corrected, and helped.

“Lastly—remember the importance of moral and religious principles.”

WASTE OF TIME.

Of late there has been much discussion on the subject of *short time*; that is, whether certain classes of operatives should work ten or twelve hours daily. We need not here debate this question. Let us at once take it for granted, that the working-classes labour only ten out of every twenty-four hours. Striking off other two hours for meals, and nine, for sleep and dressing, three hours remain to be disposed of—probably four or five on Saturday. How these three hours daily should be spent, is a question which it behoves every man to put to himself. Let us offer him a little counsel in this difficult affair.

Our advice is, that these hours should be systematically devoted, partly to some kind of healthful recreation in the open air, when the weather permits, partly in attending to family interests, and partly in the duty of self-improvement. When there is a reading-room, a mechanics' institution, or a library, attach yourself to one or other of these useful establishments. Lectures, books, and periodicals, form an endless source of recreation and instruction. Avoid drinking or debating clubs, take no hand in party wranglings, shun ill-disposed acquaintances, don't spend your precious time lounging in the open street. It is most painful to see the amount of valuable time consumed by working-men in the streets. At meal-hours, and after their day's work, they may be seen standing with their hands in their pockets, doing literally nothing but looking in each other's faces like so many sheep. Such practices display an extraordinary

vacuity of mind, a total want of all ambition for improvement. When to this is added the time too often misspent lounging about on Sundays, it may be said that great numbers of the working-classes allow at least a fifth or sixth part of their whole waking existence to go to utter waste. It is by making a good use of spare hours that so many men in the middle ranks have risen to eminence; and there is no reason whatever that the members of any handicraft should not reap like advantages from making a similar use of their spare time.

ATTENTION TO LITTLE THINGS.

Colonel Maceroni, among his "Seasonable Hints" in the Mechanics' Magazine for January 1836, states that he has had only three pairs of boots for three years, and he thinks he shall not want any more for five years to come. And why? Why, because he has studied out a preserving preparation, suitable to the leather, and applied it in a suitable manner. Now, is there *no use* in that, brother mechanic? A little matter I know it is. Life, and the comforts of it, and the expense of it, and the use of it too, are all made up of little matters. The ocean and the land are made up of little matters—drops of water and particles of dust. I come every way, in a word, to one and the same conclusion. The mechanic, to conduct his business to advantage, or to live like a decent human being, to enjoy health and strength, to do justice to himself or family—to be, in a word, a comfortable, a respectable, or a useful person—must not be an ignorant or an inattentive man; and the more he knows and studies of the right sort of knowledge, the better it will be. This he must do for himself. Other men may do something for him. They *have* done a great deal. But they have not done, they cannot do all; no, nor the best part. A man's mind, like his eating and breathing, belongs to himself; and I should be as sorry to have my *thinking* done by my neighbour, as to have him eat up all my bread and potatoes, when I am as hungry as he is. I do not know why Colonel Maceroni, or anybody else, should have the better of me or my reader in that affair of the boots. I advise you to see to it, at anyrate. And do you ask what is the colonel's recipe? I'll tell you what *mine* is. Go, see for yourself, my good friend. You might have invented it as well as he; but as you have not, do the best you can: read it, remember it, and practise it. Do the same in other matters. Keep a bright look-out. Take care of yourself. Mind your business. See, hear, read, think; and, my life on it, you'll come out as well as Colonel Maceroni.

There is a great deal which passes for luck, which is not such. Generally speaking, your "*lucky fellows*," when one searches closely into their history, turn out to be your fellows that know what they are doing, and how to do it *in the right way*. Their luck comes to them because they work for it: it is luck well

earned. They put themselves in the way of luck. They keep themselves wide awake. They make the best of what opportunities they possess, and always stand ready for more; and when a mechanic does thus much, depend on it, it must be *hard* luck indeed if he do not get at least employers, customers, and friends. "One needs only," says an American writer, "to turn to the lives of men of mechanical genius to see how, by taking advantage of little things and facts which no one had observed, or which every one had thought unworthy of regard, they have established new and important principles in the arts, and built up for themselves manufactories for the practice of their newly-discovered processes." And yet these are the men who are called the *lucky* fellows, and sometimes envied as such. Who can deny that their luck is well earned? or that it is just as much in *my* power to "go ahead," as the Yankees say, as it was in theirs.*

A TASTE FOR READING.

In an admirable speech on the subject of common-school education, delivered by Governor Everett at a public meeting at Taunton, Bristol county, in one of the New-England States, the following passages occur on the cultivation of a taste for reading:—

"It is a great mistake to suppose that it is necessary to be a professional man in order to have leisure to indulge a taste for reading. Far otherwise. I believe the mechanic, the engineer, the husbandman, the trader, has quite as much leisure as the average of men in the learned professions. I know some men busily engaged in these different callings of active life, whose minds are well stored with various useful knowledge, acquired from books. There would be more such men, if education in our common schools were, as it well might be, of a higher order; and if common-school libraries, well furnished, were introduced into every district, as I trust in due time they will be. It is surprising how much may be effected, even under the most unfavourable circumstances, for the improvement of the mind, by a person resolutely bent on the acquisition of knowledge. A letter has lately been put into my hands, so interesting in itself, and so strongly illustrative of this point, that I will read a portion of it; though it was written, I am sure, without the least view to publicity.

'I was the youngest,' says the writer, 'of many brethren, and my parents were poor. My means of education were limited to the advantages of a district school, and these again were circumscribed by my father's death, which deprived me, at the age of fifteen, of those scanty opportunities which I had previously enjoyed. A few months after his decease, I apprenticed myself to a blacksmith in my native village. Thither I carried an indo-

* From an excellent little book called "Hints to Mechanics."

mitable taste for reading, which I had previously acquired through the medium of the society library; all the historical works in which I had at that time perused. At the expiration of a little more than half my apprenticeship, I suddenly conceived the idea of studying Latin. Through the assistance of an elder brother, who had himself obtained a collegiate education by his own exertions, I completed my Virgil during the evenings of one winter. After some time devoted to Cicero, and a few other Latin authors, I commenced the Greek. At this time it was necessary that I should devote every hour of daylight, and a part of the evening, to the duties of my apprenticeship. Still I carried my Greek grammar in my hat, and often found a moment, when I was heating some large iron, when I could place my book open before me against the chimney of my forge, and go through with *tupto*, *tupteis*, *tuptei*, unperceived by my fellow apprentices, and, to my confusion of face, with a detrimental effect to the charge in my fire. At evening I sat down, unassisted and alone, to the Iliad of Homer, twenty books of which measured my progress in that language during the evenings of another winter. I next turned to the modern languages, and was much gratified to learn that my knowledge of the Latin furnished me with a key to the literature of most of the languages of Europe. This circumstance gave a new impulse to the desire of acquainting myself with the philosophy, derivation, and affinity of the different European tongues. I could not be reconciled to limit myself in these investigations to a few hours after the arduous labours of the day. I therefore laid down my hammer, and went to New Haven, where I recited to native teachers in French, Spanish, German, and Italian. I returned at the expiration of two years to the forge, bringing with me such books in those languages as I could procure. When I had read these books through, I commenced the Hebrew with an awakened desire of examining another field; and by assiduous application, I was enabled in a few weeks to read this language with such facility, that I allotted it to myself as a task, to read two chapters in the Hebrew Bible before breakfast each morning; this, and an hour at noon, being all the time that I could devote to myself during the day. After becoming somewhat familiar with this language, I looked around me for the means of initiating myself into the fields of Oriental literature, and to my deep regret and concern, I found my progress in this direction hedged up by the want of requisite books. I immediately began to devise means of obviating this obstacle; and after many plans, I concluded to seek a place as a sailor on board some ship bound to Europe, thinking in this way to have opportunities of collecting at different ports such works in the modern and Oriental languages as I found necessary for this object. I left the forge and my native place to carry this plan into execution. I travelled on foot to Boston, a distance of more than a hundred miles, to find

some vessel bound to Europe. In this I was disappointed; and while revolving in my mind what steps next to take, I accidentally heard of the hall of the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester. I immediately bent my steps towards this place. I visited the hall, and found there, to my infinite gratification, such a collection of ancient, modern, and Oriental languages, as I never before conceived to be collected in one place; and, sir, you may imagine with what sentiments of gratitude I was affected, when, upon evincing a desire to examine some of these rich and rare works, I was kindly invited to an unlimited participation in all the benefits of this noble institution. Availing myself of the kindness of the directors, I spend about three hours daily at the hall, which, with an hour at noon, and about three in the evening, make up the portion of the day which I appropriate to my studies, the rest being occupied in arduous manual labour. Through the facilities afforded by this institution, I have been able to add so much to my previous acquaintance with the ancient, modern, and Oriental languages, as to be able to read upwards of *fifty* of them with more or less facility.'

"I trust I shall be pardoned by the ingenuous author of this letter, and the gentleman to whom it is addressed, for the liberty I have taken, unexpected, I am sure, by both of them, in thus making it public. It discloses a resolute purpose of improvement (under obstacles and difficulties of no ordinary kind) which excites my admiration, I may say my veneration. It is enough to make one who has had good opportunities for education hang his head in shame."

The party thus alluded to is Elihu Burritt, well known as a journalist and a lecturer on Peace.

ECONOMY.

Of this indispensable virtue something has already been said. Economy signifies management—the proper management of means. It is an old saying, "that a penny in the purse is better than a friend at court." There is much truth in this; for if we cannot help ourselves by any little reserve which we may have laid up for the day of misfortune, we shall perhaps find that we are held in very little estimation even by those whom we suppose to be our friends. "Help yourselves, and your friends will like you the better," is a capital old proverb to keep in remembrance; nothing being more certain than that we shall be the more thought well of, the more we do not require to ask any favours or assistance. To working-men it should be an object of high ambition to attain as great proficiency as possible in the business to which they have attached themselves. In general, this proficiency is only to be acquired by leaving the place of their birth, or where they have been bred, and going to a town where there is more to be learned. Young artisans should, if possible, always see as much as they can of the way of working at their respec-

tive handicrafts. But to travel to a distance, to remove from one place to another, is attended with a certain expense; and how is this expense to be borne unless something has been saved? It very often happens, that for want of so small a sum as twenty shillings, a working-man is completely hampered in his designs of bettering his condition, by removal to a better locality, and is likewise totally unable to improve himself by going to see better modes of handicraft.

These should form strong arguments for artisans attempting to save a little money off their wages. True, their wages are frequently small; but if there be a sincere desire to rise in the world, or to maintain permanently a degree of decent comfort, even although a man should remain a hard labourer the greater part of his life, it is essentially requisite that an effort should be made to store up a trifle from the amount of the weekly, quarterly, or half-yearly wage. If the *great future*—the whole of an after-period of life—is to be for ever sacrificed to the *limited present*, no good can ever be expected to be done by any one, no matter what be his rank or occupation. How many thousands willingly doom themselves to a life of perpetual struggling with poverty, simply by consuming daily the whole of what they earn daily! If they would but lay by the merest fraction of their daily winnings, there would be no fear of the result; but this they perversely neglect, or are unwilling to do, and lasting hard labour and harassment—sometimes having, sometimes wanting—is the consequence. At his outset in life, the writer of this had not five shillings in the world, and had not a single friend to help him—he was unknown, and steeped in penury. Now, that he is surrounded with comforts, nothing strikes him as so remarkable, as seeing persons going about who have not advanced one inch during a long interval of years, and who, as he remembers, were exactly on a par with him as to poverty, occupation, and resources. There they are, the same forlorn, poverty-stricken beings; the only difference in the present day being, that they are now much older and less able to undergo exertion than formerly. The only cause which can be assigned for these persons remaining in their original condition is, that *they have daily consumed what they have daily earned*—left nothing over; while he who writes, at first entered upon a regular practice, to which he strictly adhered, of not consuming all that he earned, but on the contrary saving a trifle, and so adding to his stock and his resources. The difference in point of enjoyment in the two lines of conduct is just this—that in the one, all “the good things” are eaten up by the way in youth; while in the other, a certain quantity are reserved to be eaten up in middle and old age. No man can “both eat his loaf and have it.”

If those individuals whom I have mentioned as having been so imprudent as to consume the whole of their earnings, had been at any time asked why they did not save a little as they

went on, the answer in all likelihood would have been, "What use is it?—what good can the saving of a penny or two do? If we could lay by a pound now and then, it would be something; but for poor fellows like us to try to save, is all stuff: let us enjoy life while we have it; we may all be dead to-morrow; so let us have another bottle of ale, as long as we can get it." Such is the ridiculous sort of reasoning of thousands of young men who could easily, by a little self-denial, put themselves in the way of enjoying much future comfort, not to speak of respectability of character. It is clear that these reasoners are blind to one of the most important objects of attainment in economising means. He who spends all he wins, has never anything to enable him to embrace any favourable opportunity that may arise of bettering himself. It is true that to save a penny or two is of very little use; but if the habit of saving a penny or two, whether in money or any other kind of property, once becomes fixed, and the thoughts be turned in the direction of advancement, the accumulation will go on, and be ultimately successful. We shall suppose that an artisan, by saving, one way and another, has ten pounds accumulated and safely lodged in a Savings' Bank. Now, just think for a little on what can be done with ten pounds. A working-man, with ten pounds, and free of debt or incumbrances, is in an enviable state of independence. For this sum he can transport himself to any part of America where the highest wages are given for labour; and this being done judiciously, he will be in the midst of plenty for life—be in a condition to be envied by half the gentry in Britain. For this sum he can perhaps set up in business in a small way at home. Or he can weather out any serious dulness in his trade, till better times arrive. Or he can endure with complacency a temporary illness, which lays him off work. Or he can remove to a distant town where the best kind of employment in his profession is to be had. Or, supposing he be an aspiring young man, he can greatly improve his skill by travelling. We mention these things to show what advantages are frequently lost by working-men having never anything to spare. A few pounds, the result of saving, well laid out in the way just spoken of, will furnish ideas, which are a sort of capital for life. Besides, for the sake of the mere rational gratification of seeing other scenes of industry than those which surround a man's birthplace, it is worth while making a little sacrifice, exercising a little self-denial.

However advantageous the saving of money may be to young unmarried artisans, the practice is essentially requisite by men who have burdened themselves with a wife and children. In their case contingencies are constantly arising in which extra expenditure is required, not to speak of the necessities which ensue and must be provided for when stoppages of employment occur. According to the constitution of trade and manufactures in this country, sudden and embarrassing stoppages may from

time to time be pretty certainly calculated upon. Almost every workman now-a-days is at the mercy of a system of mercantile gambling, carried on by parties over whom the operative class of men have no kind of control : it therefore behoves the persons so situated to exercise such an economy of means, and enter upon such arrangements, as may be calculated to relieve them from the occasional humiliation of requiring eleemosynary aid on behalf of themselves and little ones.

In reciting a few of the advantages which may result from the saving of money, small as the saving may at first be, we have not adverted to one of the main benefits to be obtained. This is the advantage of having money to lay out when a great bargain is to be had. Occasions are perpetually arising in this changeable world of objects of value being to be had for a small price, but it is necessary that that price be paid in ready money. The necessities and follies of the rash and extravagant part of mankind are continually throwing advantages into the hands of the careful. How often are poor persons heard to say, " I wish I could but command ten, or at the utmost twenty pounds ; such a sum would completely set me on my feet!" But as these sums cannot possibly be mastered, the persons so unhappily situated must submit to go on for ever in poverty. It is by the possession of such sums that the early steps of rising in the world are planted. The first footsteps once accomplished, and a good character being established, all the rest is a matter of easy acquisition.

WHERE TO DEPOSIT SAVINGS.

The most convenient and secure place for the deposit of small sums which can be spared from ordinary outlays, is the National Security Savings'-Bank, of which a branch is established in almost every town in the United Kingdom, and open at certain hours several days in the week. The interest given on deposits, though not large, helps to increase the accumulation ; and on this account, as well as from the perfect security afforded, the Savings'-Bank is preferable as a place for receiving regular or occasional deposits. The money can be withdrawn, wholly or in part, at any time, along with the interest. The principal use of the Savings'-Bank to a working-man is, its affording a convenient place of deposit for sums which will be required at certain seasons to pay for rent, clothing, and other things. As a means of providing for sickness and old age, it is also available ; but in this respect it is excelled by the Friendly or Provident Society.

Friendly Societies are a union of individuals, who mutually assist each other. Each contributes a weekly or monthly payment, which is so much money sunk in order to insure a return during sickness, or after a certain age. Money deposited in a Savings'-Bank may be speedily exhausted by draughts during

illness; but after certain weekly payments are made to a Friendly Society, the member is secure of succour, however long his sickness may continue. By this arrangement, which is that of general insurance associations, the fortunate, or those who need no assistance, pay for the unfortunate, or those whom sickness happens to overtake. No one can tell to which of these classes he may belong; but it is known, by long experience, how many men in the hundred will be sick in the course of a year; and this affords a proper basis for calculating what should be received and paid out. *Many Friendly Societies are established on principles of erroneous calculation, and their constitution is likewise defective.* Those who trust their money to these societies, run the greatest risk of never receiving a farthing back, in the event of sickness. Essentially insolvent, these societies are constantly on the brink of ruin. We could point out several wide-spread associations of this dangerous class, by whom the working-classes will one day suffer immense spoliation. On this account we recommend very great caution as to becoming members of friendly insurance fraternities. There are four marks by which a properly instituted society may be known:—First, Has the society had its rules authenticated by the proper government officer? Second, Has it a charter of incorporation? Third, Are its directors known and respectable men? And fourth, Does it publish clear statements of its affairs? If it possess no charter, there can be no legal recourse against it, unless by summoning every individual member; and it would be somewhat difficult to summon perhaps twenty thousand men, scattered over all parts of the country.

One of the safest and most approved Friendly Societies is that established in Edinburgh in connection with the School of Arts. It has three separate schemes—namely, a sickness fund, deferred annuity fund, and a life-assurance fund. Much or little can be paid in, the payments out being in proportion. For a general explanation of the principles and rules of this society, we refer to the sheet “Social Economics of the Industrious Orders,” in our “Information for the People.” Special information on the subject may be obtained from F. Burke, Esq., accountant, York Place, Edinburgh.

Latterly, Building Societies have been established in different parts of England, for the purpose of assigning property or houses to members. We believe that where these are under proper regulation, they are likely to be useful, and prove worthy of support. Unfortunately, the law of England, as well as of Scotland, by giving heritable property to the eldest son in the event of the owner’s death, and in case of a will not being made devising the property otherwise, must tend to defeat the operation of this social improvement. Independently of this, the enormous cost, at least in Scotland, of transferring house property, will very much lessen the advantages which a working-man expects to realise by becoming the proprietor of his own dwelling. Where

men have no decided prospect of living and working always in the same spot, it will be preferable for them to rent, instead of owning property ; for nothing should ever stand in the way of removing to new fields of labour, when such seems desirable.

We have, however, a better opinion of Building Societies generally, than of a scheme lately set on foot by a society for assigning an acre of land to its members, in requital of certain payments. There is every reason to believe that this community land-buying project will eventually break up, with loss to the greater number of the parties concerned ; and we earnestly discommend any one from joining it. Even if successful, the idea of a mechanic removing from a town where he is well employed to a rural district, there to commence living by the produce of an acre of land, wrung with difficulty from the soil, would seem too insane to be gravely entertained, did we not know that, allowing themselves to be carried away by clap-trap oratory, too many of the operative orders give credence to all sorts of fallacies.

INTEMPERANCE.

Recommendations to save money will, we fear, be of little value where habits of intemperance require to be subdued. In alluding to the prevalent appetite for intoxicating liquors, we may be said to touch the grand sore which eats into the vitals of the manual labouring-classes. How sorrowful and humiliating the reflection, that be the times good, or be they bad, a large portion of all the earnings in the shape of weekly wages is consumed in purchasing intoxicating drinks ! In the United Kingdom, annually, upwards of fifty millions of pounds sterling are spent in the purchase of wines, spirits, and malt liquors—the bulk of which is believed to be consumed by the humbler classes generally. The money so spent is in amount far beyond what is paid for supporting all the churches, chapels, and clergymen in the country.

The statistics of intemperance need not here be dwelt upon, for they have already engaged attention in the Tracts (No. 23) ; it will be sufficient to draw attention to a few facts. We would in all friendliness invite the working-classes to consider whether, as a body, they can possibly rise to a more respected position so long as this monster vice is so extensively practised by them. Tavern drinking by the higher and middle classes, once so common, may now be said to be unknown, except in places where habits of a mean order still happen to linger. The practice of resorting to public-houses, or of getting tipsy, is now almost entirely confined to the humbler classes. A hundred years ago, it was nothing wonderful to see a lord reeling home drunk ; and duchesses were occasionally seen going away tipsy from places of public entertainment. The increasing refinements of a century have banished these sights. The only persons now seen

drunk in the streets are—how melancholy is the confession!—working-men, or at least individuals whose earnings are paid in small or weekly sums. Look at the number of gin-palaces, public-houses, and taverns in the commoner streets of London, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other large towns! In one street, about a mile in length, in Edinburgh, there are a hundred spirit-shops or taverns. In Glasgow, there was lately a public-house for every fourteen families. In reference to this latter city, Sheriff Alison observes, in the course of an examination before a committee of the House of Commons:—"I am sure there are eighty thousand people in Glasgow who are just as completely heathens, to all intents and purposes, as the Hottentots of Africa. Of course they have all heard there is a God; but as to any practical operation of the influence of religion upon their minds, they never go to church, or to any place where moral or religious instruction is carried on. I should think there are ten thousand men in Glasgow who get drunk on Saturday night—who are drunk all Sunday, and are in a state of intoxication, or half-intoxication all Monday, and go to work on Tuesday."

Evidence of this nature is most appalling. It appears that in the parish of St David's in Dundee, there were lately but eleven bakers' shops, and one hundred and eight for the sale of liquors. In the parish of Lochwinnoch in Renfrewshire, three or four times more money is spent in this way than is required for the support of religion and education. The value of ardent spirits consumed in the parish of Stevenston in Ayrshire, with a population of 3681, exceeds the landed rental by £3836. Warrington in Lancashire raises £3200 per annum for all its religious, benevolent, and literary institutions, including schools, missions, Bible and Tract Societies, and Ladies' Charity; and spends £68,000 on intoxicating drinks. It is also stated, that in this town there were lately fifteen hundred drunkards; and that in one street there were more than forty drunken women. Finally, that the sum of £1460 is spent in the detection and punishment of crime; while upon the education of the poor, no more is expended than £300. In the small town of Peebles in Scotland, there is a public-house for every fifteen families, or every twenty-two males. These, it is computed, spend each £10, 18s. yearly for strong drink, or £5602 in all—a sum four or five times the amount of what is paid for the religious and educational establishments.

It is unnecessary to multiply examples of the universal expenditure on this one hideous vice—intemperance as to liquor. In vain do prosperous times arrive, when men are well employed: prosperity brings with it no blessing: money, with increased recklessness, is squandered in the lowest species of public-house debauchery. Every Saturday night, when wages are usually paid, becomes a saturnalia. Taverns and pot-houses are thronged; and men skilled in their profession, and animated with no deli-

berate wickedness, by a strange infatuation deliver themselves up to a practice to the last degree impoverishing and demoralising. The loss of money, though enormous, is perhaps the least of the evils of intemperance. The mind is vitiated, the health ruined, and the family reduced to a state of misery. But far too appalling are the horrors, to be closely scanned. Every workman may see in his own neighbourhood, and perhaps in the persons and families of acquaintances, what dire disasters are wrought through an abandonment to the mean and despicable vice of dram or beer drinking.

Smoking is only a variety of intemperance. The fumes of tobacco act as an intoxicant on the nervous system; and for this cause, independently of the loss of money, smoking should be relinquished, or, more properly, never be begun. It is ascertained by medical inquiry, that smoking, like the drinking of stimulants, is injurious to health. It produces disorders in the mucous membranes of the larynx and palate, seriously deranges the stomach, and affects the action of the heart and lungs. On the nervous system its effects are usually more fatal. Like all mean indulgences, smoking demoralises the feelings, and creates and confirms dirty and idle habits.

BORROWING FROM PAWNBROKERS.

Want of economy leads to the dangerous habit of resorting to pawnbrokers for loans. On this subject we extract the following useful observations from a small pamphlet, called the "Poor Man's Four Evils."

"The bulk of the business done in pawn-shops is in articles pledged on Monday and redeemed on Saturday. On the latter day they are taken out for use on the Sunday, and having answered this temporary purpose, are put in again on the Monday, in order to procure means for getting food during the week. Why is there this want of means? Because Saturday night and Sunday have been spent in improper, wasteful, if not guilty pleasures; or because some thriftless people are always in arrears; living on the wages of the week to come instead of the week gone by. Then how frequently is an article pledged in order to get a shilling wherewith to purchase ardent spirits! For the pawn-shop and the dram-shop are twin-brothers of darkness; they support each other, and combine to ruin thousands. In 1843 there were in Manchester one hundred and sixty pawn-shops. Say their profits were, on an average, £300 a-year each. Here is another half a million of money with which the people of that one town taxed themselves *for no purpose*, yet of their own free will. If they wished to enrich others, while they brought themselves to poverty, shame, and ruin, people could not take more effectual means. To avoid a little self-denial in getting a few shillings ahead, or to procure a momentary pleasure which leaves a sting behind, you make your children's backs bare, and

keep their bellies half empty. Calculate what you give to the publican, the quack doctor, and the pawnbroker. You and your wife spend in gin and beer at least sixpence a-day, and one shilling on a Sunday; that is four shillings a-week, or ten pounds a-year. In drugs and doctoring you spend two pounds a-year more. The pawnbroker takes every year of your money three pounds. Altogether this comes to fifteen pounds a-year. Now, suppose you earn twenty-four shillings a-week, or sixty pounds a-year, then one-fourth of your earnings are wasted. Yes; six shillings a-week, or fifteen pounds a-year, are thrown away—given to others; for nothing in return, save bad habits, bad health, and bad temper.

"Illustrative of my subject is the following anecdote, given on the authority of a respectable employer:—Missing, on a recent occasion, from his work an old servant, Mr — inquired where he was, and learning that illness confined him to his home, he went thither, and found his workman on what appeared likely to prove his deathbed, waited on in a dirty apartment by a slatternly wife, who, with all about her, gave evidence of the operation of the gin-palace and pawn-shop. About the same time the same employer was asked by another of his workmen, if he could recommend him a good and safe investment for three hundred pounds. 'Three hundred pounds!' exclaimed Mr —; 'why, has any one left you that sum?' 'No,' was the answer. 'At the end of the first year of my wedded life, my wife asked me what I had saved since we were married. "Nothing," I replied. "Nothing? Why, I have saved twenty pounds." On learning this, I resolved never again to enter a gin-shop. I have kept my word; and am now worth a thousand pounds.'

"These two men, both mechanics, were about the same time apprenticed to the same master, were equally clever, employed in the same branch of their trade, and for years they received the same wages. The only marked difference was, that the sick man occasionally lost a day from idleness. The other had married a prudent, thrifty wife, and rose step by step to the post of confidential overseer in the large establishment in which he served his time. This is no rare case. The foreman in every room in our factories, and every foreman in other large works, owe their elevation, respectability, and comfort, to being honest, sober, and trustworthy; and many of them are good men, good husbands, good fathers, and good servants in the main, because they are so happy as to have neat, clean, industrious, and striving wives, who would rather suffer anything than visit a gin or a pawn shop."

HEALTH.

A working-man's labour being his stock in trade, it is of the utmost importance that nothing should occur to diminish its amount or its efficacy. Bad health, unfortunately, will do both;

and the preservation of health, therefore, should become not only a pleasure, but a duty. Intemperance in drinking and smoking, as already stated, will impair health. But there are many other causes which will conspire to ruin the health of the workman and his family. These are want of cleanliness, want of proper ventilation in dwellings and work-rooms, undue exposure to cold, and improper diet. Numerous additional causes of disease could be mentioned ; but these only need here engage attention.

Although the hands of a working-man may be soiled by his labour, that is no reason for his being not otherwise clean. The best way to insure cleanliness of person, is to make a regular habit of washing and bathing. The hands and face, as a matter of course, require frequent ablution with soap and water ; but that is not enough for insuring health. The whole body must be pretty frequently subjected to the warm or tepid bath. Another kind of bathing also found serviceable, and easily accomplished, consists in sponging the whole person with cold water in the morning before going out to work. This simple species of ablution, along with rubbing with a hard towel, not only purifies, but braces the body, and enables it to endure cold and exposure. Many persons who cannot conveniently have baths in their house, resort to this inexpensive kind of bathing.

Latterly, the working-classes have shown a disposition to encourage public baths, where warm bathing can be obtained on a cheap scale. Every one must wish well to this movement, which, if carried out in sincerity of purpose, may prove an important turning-point in the condition of workmen.

Cleanliness of apparel—frequent shifting of the clothing next the skin in particular—is also of great importance. But all efforts at cleanliness will in no small degree be unavailing, if care is also not taken to breathe wholesome air. On this point there prevails the most lamentable ignorance. It does not seem to be known, that by each exhalation we vitiate the air to a certain extent ; and that, therefore, if a room be too crowded, or have not a free inlet for the atmosphere, it will soon be full of bad air, which cannot be breathed again without injury. Unless an apartment be large and high in the roof, not more than two or three persons should sleep in it ; and even although large, it should have an inlet for fresh air. The letting in of air may be inconvenient from cold, but far better suffer a little cold than breathe a slow poison. Every morning, after all are out of bed, the window and door should be opened, and a good draught made to go through the house, clearing away all aerial impurities in its course. By over-closeness, and the want of this or some other kind of ventilation, few of the houses of the humbler classes are healthful ; and the consequence is, that typhus fever, and other fatal disorders, prevail among them at nearly all seasons, slaying thousands of young and old, and producing terrible

misery in families. Want of ventilation has also the effect of depressing the moral and physical energies; and to get relief, men in such circumstances take to stimulants, which only lead to worse results. A clean well-aired house may be considered a safeguard of temperance; but a house dirty, in disorder, over-crowded, and badly ventilated, is almost certain to be the home of the reckless and dissipated.

Most unfortunately for the working-classes, there are few large towns in which houses can be obtained suitable in size and reasonable as to rent; and therefore vast numbers of well-disposed persons, with their families, are compelled to lodge in places detrimental to health and offensive to decency. This is really a serious grievance, almost entitled to be called national, and we should be glad to hear of its abatement. In some towns societies have been established to supply a better class of dwellings; but in general, the bulk of mechanics are confined in their choice of houses to a mean order of buildings, destitute of sewerage, water, and all else that contributes to moral and physical well-being.

Where we have made inquiries as to the apparent unwillingness of capitalists to build houses on speculation for the accommodation of workmen, the invariable answer has been, that houses at a small rent are a bad species of property. It is alleged that among the humbler classes generally, there is a disposition to evade the payment of rent, or at least to be careless of the trouble which they give to proprietors. Windows are broken, and other injuries done to the property, with, it is said, little or no consideration as to the loss which will be sustained by the owner; and that in many cases no rent would be got at all, if it were not rigorously exacted weekly. On account of one or other of these reasons, few houses are erected specially for working-men, who are therefore obliged to take up their abode in old buildings, which, from change of times, have been abandoned by the middle and higher classes. We are inclined to think, however, that capitalists, in advancing the foregoing reasons, fall into a mistake as to the parties who would become their tenants. They confound a steady and respectable body of men—and that there are such among the miscellaneous order of workmen is undoubtedly—with the great and unfortunate class of improvidents who form a large section of the population of towns. We cannot, however, doubt that this monstrous grievance of defective dwellings will soon engage serious attention; and few things would give us greater pleasure than to hear of working-men everywhere uniting to carry out some well-considered plan for providing themselves, or of getting capitalists to provide them, with neat, commodious, and healthful dwelling-houses. General sanitary arrangements with respect to large towns, enforced by law, will alone, as we expect, lead to this desirable improvement.

The chief observation to make respecting diet is this: there may be intemperance in eating as well as drinking; and the one often leads to the other. We would recommend a plain but substantial diet, as good as can be afforded, and taken in moderation. However, change the diet as often as possible. Do not eat the same kind of food day after day. Sameness of diet causes weakness of the system, and at last produces scurvy. Many hospitals throughout the country have been lately crowded with patients affected with scurvy, from no other cause than constantly living on the same kind of diet, without varying it with vegetable substances.

The last advice we have to offer concerning health is, when you find yourself becoming unwell, apply to a respectable medical practitioner. Do not go to a quack; and buy no pills, ointments, or any other trash which you see advertised in the newspapers. Nearly all that is said in advertisements as to the efficacy of these quack medicines is false.

EMIGRATION.

Disposed as we are to approve of emigration in reference to capitalists, agriculturists, and a semi-destitute class of individuals, we would hesitate about recommending skilled workmen to leave the proper field for their labour in this country, in order to seek a new means of subsistence abroad. Only when there is an evident over-crowding of artisans, and where they may be said unduly to compete with each other for employment, should emigration be resorted to. Our belief is, that in no country in the world will a working-man by steadiness, economy, and skill, find so sure a reward as in Great Britain, all the tales told of foreign comforts notwithstanding. And why? Because in this country there is an immense realised and increasing capital wherewith to pay for employment. While, therefore, indisposed to counsel emigration to distant regions, we earnestly advise working-men to remove to whatever place in their own country they hear that there is a demand for their labour. Some may think that such a recommendation is unnecessary; and yet nothing is more remarkable than the obstinacy with which men cling to places long after remunerative employment is gone, instead of removing at once to a perhaps not very distant town, where good wages could be realised. Some families, indeed, seem to hold as if by a blind instinct to the place of their birth, rather than exert themselves manfully in bettering their circumstances by removal. On a late occasion, in passing through a country village in Scotland, it was our fortune to observe what seemed a scene of great distress—the removal of a family with their effects to a town about fifty miles distant, where the means of subsistence awaited them. All commiserated the poor people's fate, while in reality they had reason for rejoicing. Such is one of the weaknesses of human nature.

PROFESSIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE.

Allusion is elsewhere made to the superior advantages of skilled over unskilled labour. To attain the highest possible skill in the department of work in which a man is engaged, should be an object of honourable ambition. Be not satisfied with performing any branch of labour in a slovenly or barely tolerable manner; try to make your work excel in point of accuracy and taste; strive to improve on old usages; be anxious to please; for it is by all these means, along with a trustworthy steadiness, that a man gets forward in any profession. The good workman will always command the best price, provided trade is left free, and employers are allowed to exercise a discretion. The arrangement enforced in some trades, that the slow and the indifferent workman shall be paid equally with the clever and zealous, is an ingenious contrivance to keep down ability, and bring the world to a dead level.

But a man should not be satisfied with being merely skilled in his handicraft. He ought, if possible, to make himself acquainted with the principles of the operations in which he is concerned. If, for instance, he be a dyer, he should not rest contented with knowing exactly what ingredients will produce certain tints, but ascertain by inquiry why such is the case. This will cause him to study practical chemistry; and in the course of his investigations, he may perhaps make some discovery valuable to himself and the public. Independently, however, of any chance of making improvements in his profession, much good is gained by investigations into first principles. A man who goes through a routine of labour in order to produce certain results, without knowing why such results are effected, is said to act *empirically*. He acts just as a machine would act when put in motion. Is there any honour in being likened to an unreasoning machine? We think not; and it is with the view of rousing workmen to a sense of what is becoming in this respect, that we take the liberty of speaking so frankly. Fortunately, there are now few towns in which there are not mechanics' institutions and libraries, through whose aid knowledge the most profitable and agreeable may be acquired.

"The labouring man," says the Rev. H. Moseley in his Report on Education, "may have been taught many things at school; but practically, that which is associated with the earning of his daily bread, is that which will remain in his mind. He has found that task one which, if it did not fill up the full measure of his time, occupied at least all his thoughts. To know, then, the secret that lies hidden in the matter on which he works, associated as the secret is with his craft; to reflect upon it—to understand it—in secular matters; this is the proper sphere of his knowledge. Let it not be said that it is a narrow sphere. On the contrary,

that is a wide domain which is embraced in the knowledge of any one fragment of the universe, for it is united by great general laws with a knowledge of the whole. Some such fragment lies before every working-man. To tell him that he is to shut out from it the exercise of thought, or that the proper functions of his intelligence—with respect to secular things—lie rather in some other path than that, is, to a certain extent, to contravene the order of God's providence with respect to him.

"Nor need the workman think, however humble be the craft he exercises, or common the form of matter on which he is called upon to labour, that the science of it is a thing of small account. Nothing is of small account which comes from the hand of God, or any truth which is a manifestation of the Divine mind. The man who has acquired the knowledge of a law of nature, holds in his hand one link of a chain which leads up to God. It is the development of a truth which was pronounced before the foundations of the world were laid. In the eye of philosophy, the matter which cumbers it falls off, and it is seen intrinsically as beautiful when coming from one concealment as from another—when developed from the rude fragment of a rock, or from a sunbeam—when found in the organisation of an insect, or in the mechanism of the heavens.

"It is in the separation of labour from that science or knowledge which is proper to every form of it, that consists the degrading distinction of a class of the community (in the language of the manufacturing districts) as 'hands.' '*Hands!*'—Men who take a part all their lives long in manufacturing processes, involving the practical application of great scientific truths, without ever comprehending them—men, who have before their eyes continually mechanical combinations, the contrivance of which they never take the pains to inquire into—men, in respect to whom the first step has never been made which all these things would have continued, the first impulse given which these would have carried on—men, who, with the subjects of thought all around them, and with everything to impel them to the exercise of it, never exercise thought; and so, the obvious means of their education being passed, they remain always 'hands.'

"I know how many are the objections raised to this view of the functions of education. We are told of the oppositions of matter and mind, and of the circumscribing and deadening effects of matter upon thought. As though matter were not full of the elements of thought, and the appointed field for its exercise to those whose avocation it is to subdue it to the uses of man; and as though, whilst the power over outward things is enlarged by the exercise of reason and reflection, the inward life did not also gather strength."

MARRIAGE.

Every working-man possessing health, and able to earn his
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bread, may reasonably look forward to being married, and enjoying the comforts of an independent home. The period of marriage, however, should depend on circumstances. No man ought to incumber himself with the responsibilities of a wife and family, till he possess the means to do so with propriety. Unless he has saved money before marriage, he has little chance of doing so afterwards. That which, for the most part, keeps the humbler classes in a constant struggle with poverty, is marrying too early, or before they have saved a sufficiency wherewith to set up housekeeping, and encounter the drain on their resources which a family insures.

Our wish, as frequently expressed, is to elevate the working-classes, if not out of, at least in their position. We desire to see them respected, comfortable, and happy. But the only means for realising this end will consist in their subjecting themselves to the same self-denial as the generality of the middle classes. These latter classes, it may be remarked, do not marry when young, poor, and inexperienced. We do not see shopkeepers, medical men, or lawyers, marrying at nineteen or twenty years of age. Few of them marry till twenty-seven at the soonest; the greater number not till they are thirty. The reason for this is, that they desire to begin the married life respectably—not with a fortune, but with a certain amount of realised capital; and as far as can be foreseen, some degree of certainty as to future prospects. Marriages among the middle classes without these preliminaries are very rare; and when they occur, they are looked upon as wild undertakings, of which no good can come. The postponement of marriage till the age above-mentioned, may be considered preposterous. Perhaps, all things considered, it would be better if marriages could be prudently undertaken earlier; but as this, in the general state of affairs, cannot be, we must be contented to reason from existing circumstances. No one surely will argue, that there can be any justice in a man entering into matrimony without a reasonable prospect of supporting a wife and family by his earnings; and not only so, but making some provision for them in the event of his death. If he adopt no such precaution, he is running a great hazard of throwing the responsibility from off his own shoulders to those of the public. He is in effect saying, that he does not mind what comes of his family; if he die, or any other misfortune occur, they may fall on the parish for support for anything he cares. As has been said, it is very much in consequence of reckless, improvident marriages among the humbler classes, that we see such crowds of poor—great numbers of widows and orphans struggling in misery, or dependent on public charity for subsistence. It is solely with the view of averting this calamity, and of raising the working-man in his own and the world's esteem, that we recommend him to exercise patience and prudence in the weighty affair of matrimony.

HOME PLEASURES.

No working-man can thrive unless his home be clean, orderly, and comfortable; and these depend on a good domestic management. How sorrowful the fate of him whose wife is a slattern, and his home a scene of disorder! Great care in forming the matrimonial relation may, however, avert this calamity. Supposing the workman's home to be what is desirable, he has it in his power to enjoy many pleasures; for no pleasures are so enduring as those which one finds at his own fireside. On this subject we may give the following passages from a small work published in America, called "The Working-Man."

Reading should form a habitual source of pleasure; "and I would say to every working-man, *Read aloud*. If the book is borrowed, this is often the only way in which every one can get his share. If the family is very busy—and the female members of all industrious families are as much so in the evening as in the day—the reading of one will be as good as the reading of all, and while one reads, a dozen may knit or sew. There are many persons who enjoy much more, and retain much better what is read to them, than what they read themselves: to the reader himself there is a great difference in favour of reading aloud, as it regards the impression on his own mind. The members of the circle may take turns, and thus each will have a chance of learning, what so few really attain, the art of correct and agreeable reading. Occasion is thus offered for questions, remarks, and general discourse; and it is almost impossible for conversation to flag where this practice is pursued. With this method, the younger members of a family may be saved in a good degree from the perusal of frivolous and hurtful books; and if a little foresight be used, a regular course of solid or elegant instruction might thus be constantly going forward, even in the humblest family.

"But the moral and social effects of such a practice are not less to be regarded. Evenings thus spent will never be forgotten. Their influence will be daily felt, in making every member of the circle more necessary to all the rest. There will be an attractive charm in these little fireside associations, which will hold the sons and daughters back from much of the wandering which is common. It will be a cheap, wholesome, safe enjoyment, and it will be all this *at home*.

"The gains of an affectionate family ought to be shared and equalised: the remark is true of all degrees and kinds of learning. Study has a tendency to drive men to solitude, and solitude begets selfishness, whim, and moroseness. There are some households in which only one person is learned; this one, however amiable, has perhaps never thought of sharing his acquisitions with a brother or a sister. How seldom do men communicate

what they have learned to their female relations ; or, as a man once said in my hearing, ‘Who tells news to his wife?’ And yet how easy would it be, by dropping a word here and a word there, for even a philosopher to convey the chief results of his inquiries to those whom he meets at every meal. I have been sometimes surprised to see fathers, who had made great attainments, and who therefore knew the value of knowledge, abstaining from all intercourse with their sons upon the points which were nearest their own hearts. In families where the reverse of this is true—that is, where the pursuits of the house have been a joint business—it is common to see a succession of persons eminent in the same line.

“There are some pleasures which, in their very nature, are social ; these may be used to give a charm to the working-man’s home. This is more true of nothing than of music. Harmony implies a concurrence of parts ; and I have seen families so trained, that every individual had his allotted part or instrument. Let the thing, however, be conducted by some rule. If proper pains be taken with children while they are yet young, they may all be taught to sing. Where circumstances favour it, instrumental music may be added. It is somewhat unfortunate that American women practise almost entirely upon the more expensive instruments ; and it is not every man who can, or ought to give two hundred and fifty dollars for a piano-forte. In countries where the guitar is a common accompaniment, it is within the reach of the poorest. There may be lovely music, however, without any instrument.

“There are no portions of the working-man’s life in which a more constant series of innocent satisfactions is offered to him than his evenings. This is true of those at least whose trades do not encroach upon the night. When labour is over, there is an opening for domestic pleasures which no wise man will ever neglect.

“My neighbour Boswell has a high sense of these enjoyments, and makes the most of them. Except when some public meeting calls him abroad, you are as sure to find him at home in the evening, as at work in the day. Sometimes, indeed, he accompanies his wife or eldest daughter in a visit ; but he never appears at clubs or taverns. ‘I work hard,’ he is accustomed to say, ‘for my little comforts, and I like to enjoy them unbroken.’

“The picture would not be unworthy of the pencil of a Wilkie : I have it clearly in my mind’s eye. The snug and well-closed room is all gay with the blaze of a high wood-fire, which casts upon the smiling circle a ruddy glow. There is Boswell, in his arm-chair, one hand between the leaves of a book which he has just closed, the other among the auburn locks of a little prattling girl. He gazes into the fire with that air of happy reverie, which is so sure a token of a mind at rest. The wife, nearer to

the light, is plying the ceaseless needle, and distributing kind words and kinder glances among the little group. Mary, the eldest daughter, is leaning over a sheet of paper, upon which she has just executed a drawing. George, the eldest son, is most laboriously engaged in the construction of a powder-horn. Two little ones are playing the royal game of Goose; while one, the least of all, is asleep before the fire, by the dog and the cat, who never fail to occupy the same spot every evening.

" Such humble scenes, I am happy to believe, are still presented to view among thousands of families among the working-classes. Need it be added, that they are immeasurably above the sickly heats of those who make pleasure the great object of their pursuit in life? It is among such influences that religion spreads its balm, and that knowledge sheds its fruits. Rest after toil is always agreeable; but it is doubly so when enjoyed in such circumstances, in the bosom of a loving family, healthful, instructed, and harmonious. Such uniformity is never tedious; nor such quiet ever dull. Every such evening may be remembered in after-life with pleasing regrets.

" My friend tells me that it is a refreshment to his mind, during the greatest labours or chagrin of the day, to look forward to his tranquil evening. When work is done, he hastens to wash away the traces of his ruder business, and to make himself as smart as is consistent with frugal plainness. ' He who hammers all day,' he says, ' has a right to be clean at night.' This is the rule of his house; and when his sons grow large enough to be out at trades, they will no doubt come in every evening as trim and as tidy as they went out.

" It might be interesting to inquire what would be the effect upon the state of society in any village or town if every working-man in it could be induced to spend his evenings at home, and in this manner? A reform in this single particular would work wonders. Every one who is admitted to such a scene, feels at once that there is a charm in it. Why, then, are there so many families where nothing of this kind is known? To give all the reasons might be tedious; but I must mention one or two. First, there must be punctuality, neatness, and thrift in the affairs of housekeeping, to make such a state of things practicable. No man loves to take his seat between two washing-tubs, or beside a fire where lard is simmering, or to stretch his legs over a hearth where almost every spot is occupied by some domestic utensil. Then there must be a feeling of mutual respect and love, to afford inducement to come together in this way. Further, it is difficult to maintain these happy evening groups without some little sprinkling of knowledge. The house where there are no books, is a dull house: the talk is amazingly dull talk. Reading makes pleasant conversation. George always has some good thing to read to Mary; or Mary some useful fact to repeat to George. A little learning in the family is like a little salt in

the barrel—it keeps all sound and savoury. And, finally, it is incumbent to say that he who overtasks his days has no evenings. In our country, thank God! labour need not be immoderate to keep one alive. There is such a thing as working too much, and thus becoming a mere beast of burden. I could name some men, and more women, who seem to me to be guilty of this error. Consequently, when work is past, they are fit for nothing but solid sleep. Such are the men and the women who have no domestic pleasures; no reading, no improvement, no delightful evenings at home."

I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, home-born happiness,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturbed retirement, and the hours
Of long uninterrupted evening know.—COWPER.

CONCLUSION.

Had space permitted, we should have gladly availed ourselves of the opportunity of making observations on a few other topics. It might have been desirable, for instance, to show workmen of all ranks the necessity for sending their children to school, and giving them such an education as is consistent with their means—and how much more honourable it would be to do so, than to make their children mere engines of profit by sending them into factories. We should likewise have wished to show the fallacy of the too-industriously-propagated notion—that employers, as a body, are animated by any species of desire to oppress workmen, by unduly keeping down their wages or otherwise; though, possibly, any representations to the contrary on our part, might have little influence in modifying prejudices which time and experience will alone effectually dispel. Partly in connexion with this subject, and while recommending social harmony among all classes as very desirable for the common weal, we would have been anxious to sympathise with the working-classes in some adverse circumstances to which they may continue to be less or more exposed; at the same time, however, assuring them that while health is spared, and remunerative labour is to be had, their condition admits of much varied happiness. "It is not uncommon," observes an author lately quoted, "to hear mechanics and other working-men repining at their lot in life, especially as compared with that of such as are engaged in the learned professions. In hours of despondency, those are imagined to be happy who are freed from the necessity of manual labour, whether as men of wealth or of letters. Contentment is the best policy. All is not gold that glitters. Inaction is not ease. Money will not purchase happiness. Lords and ladies are often very wretched people; and the instances are numerous in which even kings

have thought men of humble stations the happiest. M. D'Alembert relates that Frederick, king of Prussia, once said to him, as they were walking together in the gardens of Sans Souci, 'Do you see that old woman, a poor weeder, asleep on that sunny bank? She is probably happier than either of us.' So, also, Henry IV. exclaims, in Shakspeare—

‘ Canst thou, oh partial sleep ! give thy repose
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude ;
And in the calmest and most stillest night,
With all appliances and aids to boot,
Deny it to a king ? ’

which may remind us of a saying of a greater and wiser king than either : ‘ The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much ; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.’ And before I dismiss my royal witnesses, let me cite King James I. of England, who used to say that the happiest lot in life was that which set a man below the office of a justice of the peace, and above that of a petty constable. The truth is, labour is not an evil. ‘ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,’ sounds like a curse, but has been made a blessing by our benign Creator. Health, strength, and cheerfulness are promoted by the proper use of our bodily powers. Among the Jews, labour was accounted so honourable and so necessary, that every man used to be bred to some trade, that so he might have a resource in case of misfortune. The same sentiment has prevailed in other Eastern nations. One of the Hebrew rabbis has the surname of the Shoemaker, and another of the Baker. Sir Paul Ricaut somewhere mentions that the Grand Seignior, to whom he was ambassador, had been taught to make wooden spoons. There cannot be a greater mistake than to suppose that mental exertion is less wearing than the labour of the hands. Head work is the hardest work in the world. The artisan feels this if at any time he has to spend a whole day in calculation. All men of learning testify to the same truth, and their meagre frames and sallow complexions tell a plainer tale than their words. Sir Edward Coke, the great English lawyer, speaks thus concerning his great work : ‘ Whilst we were in hand with these four parts of the Institutes, we often, having occasion to go into the country, did in some sort envy the state of the honest ploughman and other mechanics. For one, when he was at his work, would merrily sing, and the ploughman whistle some self-pleasing tune, and yet their work both proceeded, and succeeded ; but he that takes upon him to write, doth captivate all the faculties and powers both of his mind and body, and must be only attentive to that which he collecteth, without any expression of joy or cheerfulness while he is at his work.’ Will not these words breathe a degree of consolation to many who heedlessly consider that all toil is confined to the working-classes.